Extension of retirement age for regimental commissioned officers

*191. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Regimental Commissioned Officers have not been given the benefit of extension of their retirement age, whereas regular officers have been given this benefit;

(b) if so, whether this denial of extension in retirement age at par with regular officers, would affect their moral adversely, which may dampen their spirit, so necessary for an Army Officer, defending the country;

(c) how the Government proposes to undo the wrong being done in the case of Regimental Commissioned Officer; and

(d) what is the time-frame which this discrepancy would be removed?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) The retirement age of Regimental Commissioned Officers (RCOs) was enhanced by 2 years as in case of other regular service officers, w.e.f. 30th May, 1998. The retirement age of RCOs was enhanced from 50 years or 10 years of service to 52 years or 12 years of service, whichever is earlier.

A proposal to further enhance the retirement age of RCOs to 54 years of age or 14 years of service, whichever is earlier, has been referred to the VI Central Pay Commission so that the RCOs become eligible for time based promotion to the rank of Lt. Col. after 13 years of reckonable service as recommended by the AV Singh Committee.

Schemes for welfare of weavers

†*192. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of schemes being executed by Government at present for the welfare of the weavers;

(b) whether any scheme, namely Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana (DDHPY), was operating at one point of time;

(c) if so, since when and duration thereof, together with the outcome of the scheme; and

(d) whether this scheme has been discontinued now?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINGH VAGHELA): (a) During the 11th plan, the Government of India is implementing following schemes for welfare of handloom weavers:

(1) HANDLOOM WEAVERS COMPREHENSIVE WELFARE SCHEME

(i) Health Insurance Scheme

The scheme covers not only the weaver but his wife and two children also. It covers all pre-existing diseases as well as new diseases. The annual limit per family is Rs. 15000/- out of which Rs. 7500/- is for OPD. Besides handloom weavers, ancillary Handlooms workers also eligible to be covered under the scheme.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.